

COPY

LOUISIANA WILD LIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

P R O C E E D I N G S

BOARD MEETING

Friday, July 7, 1972

10:00 o'clock a.m.

J. G. JONES, Chairman

District Office
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Kathryn G. Chamberlin,
Reporter.



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P R O C E E D I N G S

. . . The Board Meeting of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission convened at 10:00 o'clock a.m. on Friday, July 7, 1972, at the Wild Life and Fisheries District Office, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Jerry G. Jones, Chairman, presiding. . . .

PRESENT WERE:

J. G. JONES, Chairman

H. C. WRIGHT, Vice-Chairman

C. M. HOFFPAUER, Director

L. J. AUTIN

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A G E N D A

HARRY SCHAFFER:

1. Discussion of extension of shrimp season in (8)
several areas.

2. Bait shrimp season. (16)

JOE L. HERRING:

3. Setting of Migratory Bird season. (20)

RICHARD YANCEY:

4. Teal Season. (4)

OTHER BUSINESS:



Expressions of appreciation re House

(24;
34)

Bills 8 and 9.

Public hearing and investigation of

(26;
34)

allegations.

Statement of H. C. Wright.

(28)

Constitutional Convention.

(30)

Allegations of Channel 4, WWL-TV, New Orleans, (31;

and Lake Charles TV station.

Experimental alligator harvest.

(35)

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THE CHAIRMAN: This is a special meeting called for a number of purposes. I might explain that there are three members of the Commission present -- myself, Mr. Autin and Mr. Wright. My interpretation of Article VI, Section 1, of the Constitution, which provides for the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, says that a quorum shall be a majority of the members of the Commission.

At the present time there are two vacancies on the Commission, which would mean that we have five members of the Commission, and there are three present. Consequently, it is my interpretation that we have a majority present. If there is



anyone here that objects to the Commission meeting at this time, on the question of an absence of a quorum, I would welcome your suggestions.

We have a member of the Commission, Mr. Berry, who is seriously ill, is in the hospital. Mr. Berry has submitted his proxy to Mr. Autin by telegram. We did this out of an abundance of precaution. I am not sure what the legal effect of the proxy is, but I thought I would just say that for the record, that he is voting Mr. Berry's proxy, but I don't think there is any question about it being a quorum, because we have only five members at the present time, and to my knowledge the Governor has not appointed replacements for Mr. Winfree, who resigned, and to Mr. Walker whose term expired when Governor McKeithen's term expired.

Hearing that, we will proceed with the agenda. We will move out of order. We will ask Mr. Yancey to come to the microphone and talk about the teal season.

MR. RICHARD YANCEY: Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission, the Commission is



authorized to establish a date for a nine-day September teal season at this time and we are required to have our dates back into Washington by the tenth of July, so it is necessary that you act on this matter at this time.

We, of course, have been having September teal seasons for about six years now and the data compiled during these seasons indicates that the best hunter opportunity is provided the later the season is held in September. We would recommend that the dates for this September season be September 22 through September 30. This would mean that the season would start on a Friday, which poses some problem. However, Charlie Bosch and the president of the Wildlife Federation were questioned on this matter at the Alexandria public hearing of the Commission, and they felt that even though this does pose some problems that we should go ahead and set these dates, rather than have the season earlier in September when fewer birds would be on hand.

Now, just as a matter of information, the season that we held last year, despite the



high waters in southwest Louisiana caused by Hurricane Edith, produced a harvest of about 183,000 teal, and we had some 27,000 hunters that participated in that season, so a great amount of hunter opportunity was provided last year and during previous years, and the estimated fall flight of teal last year was some ten to twelve million birds, so the harvest taken during these September seasons is not even scratching the resource, but it is providing a lot of hunter opportunity.

Unless there is some objection to these dates, beginning Friday, September 22, running through September 30, 1972, we would recommend that you adopt these at this time.

I might further add that the bag limit will be four daily and eight in possession, and the shooting hours will be sunrise to sunset, not thirty minutes before sunrise to sunset. This will reduce the number of other birds that may be taken during the season that you would possibly shoot during the dawn hours. You might shoot a pintail or something like that.

MR. CLARK HOFFPAUER: You might explain



that they won't let us go into October. We have to stop in September.

MR. YANCEY: Right. The Commission had forwarded a recommendation to Washington, asking that the framework be extended into October 1, so that we could start on Saturday, September 23, and close on Sunday, October 1, but they did not allow this in the framework. The framework that they are allowing is only during the month of September. We were turned down on that request, and this is another complication that makes it almost necessary that we begin this season on a Friday.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have heard the recommendation. What is your pleasure?

MR. WRIGHT: I so move, Mr. Chairman.

MR. AUTIN: I second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Autin. Is there any further discussion? Is there any objection?

(No response)

Hearing none, so ordered. Thank you.

Harry.

MR. HARRY SCHAFFER: Mr. Chairman, Members



of the Commission, we have three shrimp areas that we usually keep open, or open, after the brown shrimp is closed, and it has been done traditionally after a study by our field biologists, who ascertain that there is a large population of large brown shrimp available and that the white shrimp have not moved in.

The areas are the ship channel from the Intracoastal Canal to where it terminates. Then in Breton Sound there is a square that has been traditionally opened, and the other area is Calcasieu Lake. I have three separate resolutions for each area, and it really would authorize the Director or Assistant Director, Dr. St. Amant, to open these areas or keep them open after the season is over if the biologists find that there are the shrimp there and that the white shrimp have not moved in. I would recommend that these resolutions be passed.

THE CHAIRMAN: They provide for the same way of determining whether you are going to close the season?

MR. SCHAFER: The season would be closed



on 24-hour notice if the white shrimp move in or if we have any difficulty in enforcing the regulations.

THE CHAIRMAN: As I understand your resolutions, we are giving them the authority to open and to close, based upon the biological information.

MR. SCHAFER: Right.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have heard the recommendation. What is your pleasure?

MR. AUTIN: I so move.

MR. WRIGHT: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Autin, seconded by Mr. Wright. Is there any other discussion? Is there any objection?

(No response)

Hearing none, so ordered.

(Texts of the resolutions
are here made a part of
the record.)

WHEREAS, the local shrimping
interests in the Missis'sippi River-
Gulf Outlet area have requested the



Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission to consider an extension to the brown shrimp season, based on biological indications which would not affect or be damaging to the white shrimp crop, but which would, in turn, be beneficial to the Louisiana shrimping industry, and

WHEREAS, the Commission should direct the Division of Oysters, Water Bottoms and Seafoods to determine the feasibility of this request and develop technical data necessary to establish that this is biologically sound and in the best interest of the shrimping industry,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission does hereby authorize the Director and Assistant Director to extend the shrimp season after technical evaluations of the data determine that an excess of large brown shrimp are available



in that area where the Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet leaves the Intracoastal Canal and continue to its termination in the Gulf of Mexico.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director and Assistant Director can close this area on 24-hour notice if problems develop in regard to enforcing the special season, or if the examination of catches indicate that undersized white shrimp are taken in sufficient numbers, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that official notification of this action shall consist of the preparation and release of information detailing a proper legal description of the area and the date and time of its opening to the news media for public notification.

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WHEREAS, in past years, a special brown shrimp season in a



prescribed area in Breton Sound has proven successful and beneficial to the shrimp industry, it is suggested that this special season extension be considered for 1972, and

WHEREAS, in the event that large brown shrimp are available and can be harvested in the area of Breton Sound, without damaging the white shrimp crop, and

WHEREAS, the season extension will be based upon the biological examination of the area this year as well as the knowledge compiled during past years, and

WHEREAS, the catching and landing of such a crop of brown shrimp would be most beneficial to the Louisiana shrimping industry,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, at the public meeting held on Friday, July 7, 1972, that the



Director and Assistant Director are hereby authorized to extend the shrimp season, after careful technical evaluation of the data to determine that large brown shrimp are available and can be harvested without damaging the white shrimp crop in the following described area:

Beginning at Bird Island, thence runs northwesterly to a horizontal tank battery located in the vicinity of Battledore Reef (generally northeast of Battledore Reef and east of Little Battledore Island), thence runs northeasterly to the Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet Channel at a lighted privately-maintained marker known as Station "69A" and "70A", thence southeasterly down and including the Ship Channel to lighted markers



Nos. 37 and 38, thence south-
westerly along the inside
shoreline of Breton Island to
Bird Island, which area is
approximately a nine-by-ten
mile square.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that
the Director and Assistant Director can
close this area on 24-hour notice if
problems develop in regard to enforcing
the boundaries, or if the examination of
catches indicate that undersized white
shrimp are taken in sufficient numbers,
and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that
official notification of this action
shall consist of the preparation and
release of information detailing a
proper legal description of the area
and the date and time of its opening
to the news media for public notifica-
tion.

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WHEREAS, the local shrimping interests in the Calcasieu Lake, Cameron Parish areas, have requested the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission to consider an extension to the brown shrimp season based on biological indications that this would not affect or be damaging to the white shrimp crop and in effect would be beneficial to the Louisiana shrimping industry, and

WHEREAS, the Commission should direct the Division of Oysters, Water Bottoms and Seafoods to determine the feasibility of this request and develop technical data necessary to establish that this is biologically sound and in the best interest of the shrimping industry,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission does hereby authorize the Director and Assistant Director to extend the shrimp season after technical



evaluations of the data determine that an excess of large brown shrimp are available in Calcasieu Lake.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Director and Assistant Director can close this area on 24-hour notice if problems develop in regard to enforcing the special season, or if the examination of catches indicate that undersized white shrimp are taken in sufficient numbers, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that official notification of this action shall consist of the preparation and release of information detailing a proper legal description of the area and the date and time of its opening to the news media for public notification.

MR. SCHAFER: The other item on the agenda is the resolution for establishing a bait shrimp season during the closed shrimp season, from July 16 to August 21. This is in compliance



with Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 121 by Senator Nunez.

We had a season similar to this last year and it is under strict regulations. We got together with the enforcement division and came up with some regulations. It has to be a bona fide bait dealer. He has to post a bond or a cashier's check. He has to have a live bait live well in his boat, and he has to have a legitimate bait dealer's business. I would recommend that we have this bait shrimp season.

THE CHAIRMAN: This is statewide?

MR. SCHAFER: This is statewide. Last year we had 14 people who put up their bond or put up cashier's checks and we didn't have any difficulty whatsoever.

THE CHAIRMAN: We had no enforcement problems about it?

MR. SCHAFER: No enforcement problems.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have heard the recommendation. What is your pleasure?

MR. AUTIN: I so move.

MR. WRIGHT: Second.



THE CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mr. Autin,
seconded by Mr. Wright. Is there any objection?

(No response)

Hearing none, so ordered.

(Text of the resolution
is here made a part of
the record.)

WHEREAS, Senate Concurrent
Resolution No. 121, of the 1972
Regular Legislative Session, sponsored
by Senator Samuel Nunez, urges and
requests the Wild Life and Fisheries
Commission to grant permits to bait
dealers to take live shrimp for sale
as bait during the period of closed
shrimp season, and

WHEREAS, commercial bait
fishermen are requesting the Com-
mission to grant a special compensation,
in the form of a permit, allowing them
to take live shrimp during closed
season to be used in their businesses
for sale to recreational fishermen, and



WHEREAS, last year was the first season the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission established the Special Bait Dealers Permit which proved to be most beneficial to the bait dealers and Commission records indicated there were no violations by any of the permittees,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission does hereby approve the issuance of the Special Bait Dealers Permit to bait dealers to take live shrimp for sale as bait during the period of closed shrimp season, July 16, 1972, to August 21, 1972.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that permittee shall abide by all rules and regulations as stipulated in said permit. In the event any terms of the permit are violated, the permit will be revoked and permittee will forfeit his \$1,000.00 bond or cashier check being held by the



Commission in good faith.

MR. JOE HERRING: Mr. Chairman, the first item we have on the season recommendations is doves, and again we have a three-way split of 70 half-days. We are recommending September 2-17, 16 days; October 14-November 19, 37 days; and December 23-January 8, 17 days. That is a daily bag limit of 12 and a possession limit of 24.

Do you want to take them one at a time there, Mr. Chairman?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. HERRING: We have rails, gallinules and snipe. I would like to say we made a daily kill of doves over a three-year period, and the days that we selected here, we found that these dates we would get more hunters out and possibly a better kill during this time. These are half-day seasons, as you know, but we feel like these days that are recommended here, out of our surveys we have made, are about the best days we could pick out.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have heard the recommendation on the dove season. What is your



pleasure?

MR. WRIGHT: I so move, Mr. Chairman, that we accept Mr. Herring's recommendations.

MR. AUTIN: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Autin. Is there any further discussion? Any objection?

(No response)

Hearing none, so ordered.

MR. HERRING: Mr. Chairman, the next season then would be the rail season. We have 70 days and the dates that we recommend are November 4 to January 12, 1973. The shooting hours would be a half hour before sunrise to sunset. On the bag limit on that, it will be, king and clapper rails, bag limit of 15, possession limit of 30. On the sora and Virginia rails, it would be a daily bag limit of 25 and also a possession limit of 25.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have heard the recommendation. What is your pleasure?

MR. WRIGHT: I so move.

MR. AUTIN: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr.



Wright, seconded by Mr. Autin. Is there any discussion? Any objection?

(No response)

Hearing none, so ordered.

MR. HERRING: Mr. Chairman, the next one we have is the gallinule season. We have 70 days. We are recommending September 2 to November 10 on that. The shooting hours will also be one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. The daily bag limit is 15 and the possession limit is 30 on gallinules.

THE CHAIRMAN: You have heard the recommendation. What is your pleasure?

MR. AUTIN: I so move.

MR. WRIGHT: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Autin, seconded by Mr. Wright. Is there any discussion? Any objection?

(No response)

So ordered.

MR. HERRING: Mr. Chairman, the next one is the snipe season. We have 65 days and it is recommended that the season be December 16 to



to February 18. Also, the shooting hours will be one-half hour before sunrise to sunset. Daily bag limit of 8 and a possession limit of 16.

THE CHAIRMAN: What is your pleasure?

MR. WRIGHT: I so move.

MR. AUTIN: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: Moved by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Autin. Is there any discussion? Any objection?

(No response)

Hearing none, so ordered.

MR. HERRING: Mr. Chairman, the next one will be woodcock season and we did on this one run the dates a little further into 1973 than we did the past year. This was because we had many requests from quail hunters and other that we do this, so we are recommending on the woodcock season December 9 to February 11. That will be for 65 days. Shooting hours will be one-half hour before sunrise to sunset, and the bag limit is 5 and a possession limit of ten.

THE CHAIRMAN: What is your pleasure?

MR. WRIGHT: I so move.



MR. AUTIN: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Autin. Is there any discussion? Any objection?

(No response)

Hearing none, so ordered.

MR. HERRING: That is all those that are within the federal framework that we have on that.

THE CHAIRMAN: Before you sit down, I wanted to say something about you, Joe.

I want to publicly express the Commission's appreciation for the passage of House Bill 8 and House Bill 9, involving the conservation fund and the Rockefeller Fund. So many people have worked for so many years, trying to get these things done, and I hate to single anybody out, with the Commission or with the Federation or what-have-you, the general public and the legislators themselves, because it was a concerted effort by a great number of people that we now have these two matters that have passed the legislature, and I hope the Governor will sign them.

I just wanted to say, as pertains to



House Bill 9, which is the Rockefeller Foundation Fund, as you recall, it was voted down once and on reconsideration enough votes were persuaded to vote "yes," and although Joe Herring is not a registered lobbyist, I am informed that Joe Herring worked hard and long. While I am not going to say it passed because of Joe Herring, I think the assistance that Joe gave was a great contribution in that particular bill being passed at a time when votes were hard to get.

Joe, on behalf of the Commission, I would like to thank you for what you did, in addition to thanking the other people.

MR. HERRING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There were a lot of people involved in that. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: I know, and I hate to single you out, but I wanted to do it, anyway.

That completes the items that we have on the agenda. We have a couple of other things which I want to bring up and then we are going to recess. After we recess, we are going to recess for maybe five or ten minutes, and then we are



going to come back and talk about the setting of an alligator season in Louisiana for 1972, after the recess.

There are a couple of things I want to take up before that. Number One, you read in the newspaper about a letter that the Governor wrote to me, regarding some allegations about the Director, Mr. Hoffpauer, and I am sure the news media have the letter. He says he made it public. If you want to look at it, I have the original here. It had attached to it an anonymous letter, addressed to him, with some allegations about the Director, and you can also have that if you want it.

The substance of the letter was that he requests that the Commission conduct an investigation itself into the allegations and take what action they deem appropriate and to make a recommendation to him within 60 days. I have considered the matter and I have written the following letter to him, which will be mailed today, and I would like to read it to you.

(Copies of letters above



mentioned, i.e. letter of Governor Edwards, dated June 30, 1972, with attachment, and letter of Chairman Jones, dated July 5, 1972, are attached to and made a part of the record.)

THE CHAIRMAN: My recommendation to the Commission is that our next regular meeting is the 24th at 10:00 o'clock. I wouldn't want to confuse this matter with any of the normal, regular agenda business that we had, and I would suggest that we set a meeting for this purpose at 2:00 o'clock in New Orleans on that same day. I think that would give sufficient time. Today is the 7th, and that would give us about 15, 17 days in which to publicize it.

I am going to write a letter to each employee, to be sent out, a little letter informing them of this, and we can get the appropriate publicity. I would recommend to you that we set a meeting at 2:00 o'clock on the 24th of July at



the New Orleans office, for the purpose of exploring into these allegations.

MR. WRIGHT: Do you want that in the form of a motion?

THE CHAIRMAN: I would, yes.

MR. WRIGHT: I will concur in the motion.

MR. AUTIN: Second.

THE CHAIRMAN: It has been moved by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Autin, that that recommendation be adopted. Do I hear any discussion? Do I hear any objection?

(No response)

Hearing none, so ordered.

MR. WRIGHT: Mr. Chairman, I gave you a statement I wish you would read into the record, please.

THE CHAIRMAN: This pertains to some allegations that were made about one of the members of the Commission, Mr. Wright, and he gave me a statement which he asked that I read, and he has copies which you can have.

His statement is:

"With reference to the published



report that the Sutton Lake caretaker, Lee Crawford, had barred me and two Game Agents, Alvin Armand and Marion Mayeaux, from the private lake, I wish to make the following brief statement.

"At the outset I want to say without fear of contradiction that I have never caught over the limit of fish in Sutton Lake and that the report of Mr. Crawford as a whole is purely and simply a falsehood. I can not understand what motivated him to make such a declaration unless it was for the reason that he was mad at those of us connected with the Department of Wild Life and Fisheries because Agent Armand and Mayeaux had caught Crawford last fall with two (2) squirrels he had killed out of season for



which violation he was fined \$75.00 plus \$14.00 court costs. I do not feel that the incident is deserving of any further comment from me considering the source."

THE CHAIRMAN: The other comment I have is that, as you all know, there will be an election on August 19 to select delegates to the Constitutional Convention which will meet in January. As you know, the Commission is set up in the Constitution, and they are going to be looking at the entire Constitution, and I think it behooves those of you who are connected with the wild life and fisheries resources in Louisiana to begin to formulate your own personal ideas about what you think the new Constitution should provide as it pertains to this, whether you are satisfied with what you have, whether we should have something new or something different.

I would certainly suggest to all of you, including all of our employees and other people who know a lot about fish and wild life, that they



begin to think along these lines, where they can begin to make recommendations to these people, because we will have delegates probably to the convention who are not necessarily apprised of fish and wild life matters such as you will be, and they will be relying upon your assistance. Even though the convention doesn't start until January, I think it is time now to begin to think about it so you will have things firmly in your mind.

The only other item I had was that a television station in New Orleans, Channel 4, WWL-TV, in a program -- the commentator was Mr. Bill Ellender -- made some allegations in three or four programs. I did not see the programs. I heard the tape of the voice, that was given to me over the telephone, and these were allegations which concerned possible illegal activities on the part of employees, and it was broad enough to include members of the Commission, too, involving alligator activities.

It went so far as to concern itself with allegations that possibly some of our employees were involved with bribery and murder. This is a



very serious allegation and I personally appreciate the people who are interested in getting something done about violations of the law, but I think there is a way to go about doing it. I certainly don't intend to scold anyone about it. I want the cooperation of everyone.

Consequently, I had the Director send a telegram to this station and asked that if they had any information of any kind regarding misconduct of our employees, irregularities of our employees, violations of the criminal laws of the state of our employees, that we would like to know about it. Since we are bound to conduct our business in public, I invited them to come to our public meeting and let the hide fall with the hair and give us any information they have. We likewise extended an invitation to the general public to do the same thing.

About two months ago we had a similar thing that happened in a television station in Lake Charles, where they telecast some allegations about illegal alligator activities. At that time we sent telegrams to Mr. Gallinghouse, United



States Attorney, to the Fish and Wildlife Service in Atlanta, and to that television station. We asked them to give us the benefit of any information that they had, involving our employees, and we received none.

Accordingly, at this time, if there is anybody that has any information other than mere allegations that they want to provide to us, they are welcome to come to that microphone and to give us their name and give us the information.

(No response)

Hearing no one come to the microphone, I would further invite anybody in the public or the news media, that if they come upon any such information other than rumors and they have positive information that they can give, that my time is free to them at my home or my office to give me the information, but I want to let them know that I am going to make it public, what they give me. I am going to give it to the Chief of the Enforcement Division and I am going to make it public. Thank you.

Does anyone have any other business



other than alligator season? Let's recess for five or ten minutes.

(A short recess was here taken.)

THE CHAIRMAN: The meeting will come to order.

I made two mistakes. Number One, I said our public meeting in July was the 24th. It is the 25th, so our regular meeting will be in New Orleans on the 25th at 10:00 o'clock, and at 2:00 o'clock on that day, we will have the hearing that I referred to in response to Governor Edwards letter to me, regarding allegations about irregularities on the part of the Director, so if you will please correct that.

Secondly, when I talked about the success of House Bill 8 and House Bill 9 and the Rockefeller Fund and the help that many people gave us, I left out the names of two people -- and I knew that I was going to get in trouble when I tried to give names -- but I want to give those two names. One of them is Charlie Bosch and the other is Jayta Hirschman (Note: phonetic spelling), so we want to express to both of those, in addition to the



other people, our appreciation for their help. The only other thing we need now is the Governor to sign House Bill 8 and House Bill 9. It will be a monument in Louisiana if he does that, a real monument.

The next order of business is, as I told you before, that we are going to talk about the possibility of setting an experimental alligator harvest in Louisiana. The Commission is considering at this time establishing an experimental alligator season in parts of the state.

I am in a minute going to call on Mr. Yancey to make some comments about that, but first, I would like to say that the Commission would request people that they serve on an advisory committee and we are asking Dr. Leslie Glasgow to be the chairman of the committee and Dr. Chabreck to be a member of the committee and we are going to see maybe another person in Louisiana, a professional person, to serve on the committee to advise us in connection with having an experimental alligator harvest. Dick.

MR. YANCEY: Mr. Chairman, Members of



the Commission, of course, if a season is set on alligators, then we would recommend that it be conducted on an experimental basis only and that the entire season be very carefully researched and that the experimental season be handled and controlled by a team of biologists who have worked in alligator research in this state for many years.

These biologists would come from the Refuge Division or the Fur Division and would work with a team of enforcement agents who would be appointed by the Chief of the Enforcement Division.

Secondly, that we prevail on Dr. Glasgow and Dr. Chabreck and perhaps one or two other people who are knowledgeable in this management business to serve as an advisory committee in working with our personnel in setting up the regulations under which this season would be conducted and being present during the period that this season would be conducted.

We would also like to stress the fact that a strict quota system would be established that would provide that no more than 20 percent of any given alligator population would be taken and



that this would be carefully controlled by an ironclad tagging system which would be followed by having all of the skins being processed through a validation station that would be established by the Commission, with those skins tagged and taken legally during that season being again marked and tagged by this team of people that we would have handling this season for us.

The season would only be established in a very limited area of Louisiana, to start with, in an area where we have a marsh that has a harvestable surplus of these animals and where it would actually be beneficial to the population of alligators to thin it out through a harvest, to benefit the alligator population. Also, this in addition would be beneficial to the other forms of wildlife in the area, where you have a saturated population. Of course, these animals feed on mottled ducks and other forms of bird life and, of course, the big alligators feed on the small alligators.

The season would only be set in such an area where the thinning of the population would



be desirable from the standpoint of alligators as well as other forms of marsh wildlife.

Of prime importance would be the fact that we would issue to the holders of alligator licenses immediately in advance of this season special dressing instructions that they would follow as they harvested alligators in the marshes. Now we would like to emphasize that these instructions are not going to be issued until perhaps three days in advance of the opening of the season. This would be done for the purpose of eliminating any illegally taken skins that may be taken in advance of this season or in an area of Louisiana where the season wouldn't be open in advance of the season.

Of course, we are aware of the fact and we have information that leads us to believe that there are some alligator skins in coolers in the state now that would perhaps be processed or marketed during the course of such a season, but by issuing these special dressing instructions, we feel that we could virtually eliminate the possibility of any of these illegal skins being



processed during the course of this season.

Of course, in addition to a tag being affixed to the skin or to the alligator at the time it is taken, then each skin would be tagged with a second tag by an employee of this Commission at the validation station that we would set up in the area where the season would be held within four days after the close of the season. Any untagged alligator skins found in this state after that four-day period would then be considered an illegally taken skins.

These are some of the provisions we are thinking about, if the Commission decides to set a season. Then it would be set for purposes of benefitting alligator populations in the areas where such a season would be set, as well as the other forms of wildlife in that marsh, and certainly we want to conduct it on such a basis that it will not create any problems with any other space or any other areas of Louisiana where the season would not be open.

We think that the mechanics can be set up and carried out in such a manner to preclude



that possibility.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Dick. Dr. Glasgow, I am going to ask you to be the chairman of that committee.

DR. GLASGOW: I am sure that everyone here realizes that there will be some criticism in setting a season, but I think we have reached a point in alligator populations that it is necessary to set a season or to write the alligator off as nothing more than an animal to look at.

I am very confident that this state has a sufficient number of alligators to justify a season. I am very confident that an alligator season would be an excellent project, not only for the welfare of the alligator but also the welfare of many other species of wildlife which are dependent upon the same type of habitat. The landowner needs some type of stimulus to maintain that marshland and an income from alligators is one form that will help us retain our marshlands.

I am happy to serve as an advisor because I know that this state has more knowledgeable people on alligators than any other state in this



country or any place in the world, in fact.

I think that if an alligator season will work anywhere, it will work here in Louisiana because you actually have a monopoly on the brain power that knows something about alligators. I am happy to serve in this capacity.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Doctor. Dick.

MR. YANCEY: Just one more comment that I failed to bring out that is a real important point. Of course, the alligator is on the endangered species list that is maintained by the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife. However, we, the Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, has requested that this animal be removed from that list and on June 15 we met with the Chief of the Endangered Species Program and his assistant in Washington and they agreed that this animal is not endangered in this state. We want to bring that out very forcefully, that they acknowledged to us in this meeting that that animal is not endangered in the state. However, they are going to continue to keep it on that list. Is that right, Mr. Jones? You were sitting there.



THE CHAIRMAN: That's exactly right.
That's what the man said.

MR. YANCEY: We want to bring this point out very strongly that, while they are going to keep it on the list, they do not consider it to be endangered in Louisiana.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, sir.

MR. HOFFPAUER: One of the things that the federal government was worried about was that, do we have an accurate population estimate. We do. Do we have a predetermined harvest level? We have done that. And do we have a method of harvest and sale so as to not hurt the alligator population, and we have that. I think we have met the three criteria that they were worried about.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Is there any other business to come before the Commission?

We have been in recess for a while. Is there anybody with Channel 4 in New Orleans here?

(No response)

Do I hear a motion we adjourn?

MR. WRIGHT: I move we adjourn.

MR. AUTIN: Second.



. . . Thereupon, at 12:00 o'clock noon, Friday, July 7, 1972, the special meeting of the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission, held in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was adjourned. . . .

Kathryn G. Chamberlin,
Reporter.





EDWIN EDWARDS
GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Baton Rouge

June 30, 1972

Honorable Jerry G. Jones
Chairman, Wild Life and Fisheries Commission
Cameron, Louisiana

Dear Jerry:

The enclosed anonymous letter is self-explanatory. I do not ordinarily pay attention to anonymous letters but the publicity and rumors surrounding the activity referred to in the letter and my desire to correct abuses or clear up erroneous charges prompts me to suggest that the Commission initiate an in-depth investigation into the allegations made in the enclosed letter as well as the allegations made in recent news articles. The following observations are made:

- (1) None of the present members of the Commission are my appointees and this request is made solely in fulfillment of my obligation as Governor of the State of Louisiana and in my belief that the proposed action is justified.
- (2) The Director is a personal friend of mine and from my hometown; nevertheless, please be advised that I hold him accountable to the same high degree of integrity and compliance with the law as I do other persons and I do not want friendship to color or in any way affect the investigation and the Commission's recommendations.
- (3) The Commission should publicize the proposed investigation and invite any interested parties, including Commission employees, to testify. Assurances should be given to all that the job security of any employee testifying will be protected.
- (4) I want a complete report of the investigation, findings and recommendations within sixty days. Following receipt thereof and after having had an opportunity to study same, I wish an opportunity to meet with The Board and the Director to discuss the findings.
- (5) In an effort to maintain credibility and to assure all citizens of this Administration's attitude in cases of this nature, I intend to advise the news media of this request.

Cordially yours,


Edwin W. Edwards

Governor E. Edwards
State Capitol
Baton Rouge, La.

Dear Sir:

This is a letter of complaint about Clark Hoffbauer. I am cognizant of the fact that you both are from the same area and probably have been friends for some time. I am also aware that you did not appoint him; nevertheless, you are now responsible for his actions. As you know, some of his misdeeds have recently been publicized. We have been hearing numerous other rumors which have not yet reached the papers.

Some of these are: He has his son transported back and forth to school in a Fish and Wildlife Service plane. He constantly uses state plane boats, vehicles, and personnel for his family and friends' personal enjoyment. He recently ordered [over the radio for everyone to hear!] a Service plane to bring out two inner tubes to an area where his family was spending the weekend. How much did it cost the State of Louisiana for the

Hoffpauir children to enjoy their little swim? He requires Service pilots to transport his family on weekends when they are supposed to be off duty. However, I am certain these men never complain for fear of losing their jobs.

I do not know Hoffpauir personally; I am interested in politics and in the betterment of Louisiana. I feel that it is my duty to inform you rather than just complain to friends about Louisiana's dirty politicians. I think that Hoffpauir is a very poor Fish and Wildlife Director - not just because of his misdeeds, either. I do not believe he is truly interested in preserving the streams, lakes, and natural resources in Louisiana. He can never even come close to being the Director that Dr. Glasgow was. However, he can at least cease misusing his office. He should be directed to do so by you.

I believe that most of the people employed by Fish and Wildlife have no respect for Hoffpauir; he has maltreated too many people. Therefore, if anyone in his employ starts to "tell all" the result will resemble another Dodd

scandal. I certainly hope you will give Hoffmann the word to stop abusing his office. The Times Picayune is already "down" on him and would be delighted to have this information contained here and my sources.

I am not signing my name, for my husband still needs his job. You see, I'm not sure what your ~~or~~ response will be; possibly you already knew all of this and have chosen to ignore it.

Sincerely,
A citizen

Just copy to: Daily Advertiser
Morning Advocate
Shreveport Times

July 5, 1972

Honorable Edwin Edwards
Governor, State of Louisiana
Post Office Box 44004
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Dear Governor Edwards:

I am in receipt of your letter of June 30, 1972, with its anonymous enclosure. Your conclusions are quite proper, and I whole-heartedly concur in your concern that we immediately correct any deficiencies or irregularities that exist, or clear up rumors and charges if they are erroneous.

During my tenure as chairman of the Commission, I have endeavored to conduct the public's business in public. I believe that this policy has produced dividends by instilling confidence in the public and in our employees. Accordingly, I intend to recommend to the Commission that the following action be taken:

(1) The Commission meet in an open, public meeting in our New Orleans office for the purpose of receiving testimony pertaining to allegations of irregularities on the part of the director.

(2) This meeting will be publicized well in advance and all employees of the Commission will be informed that they may freely testify, without fear of reprisal or of placing their job in jeopardy.

(3) This meeting will be conducted in accordance with the dictates of Article 6, Section 1 of the Louisiana Constitution. While this provision of the Constitution does not specify a detailed procedure, I interpret its spirit to be that we are not to conduct a "Kangaroo Court". With this in mind, we would not be concerned about receiving allegations, rumors and hearsay, but would restrict our inquiry to legally admissible evidence given under oath. As I feel it our duty to remove this matter from the field of rumor and allegation into the field of fact-finding, we must necessarily concern ourselves wholly with fact and not rumor.

(4) The Commission does not possess subpoena power, but if it appears that relevant and material evidence exists which cannot be obtained voluntarily, we will refer the matter to the Attorney General for his handling.

(5) After receiving the testimony of all persons with facts pertaining to irregularities on the part of the director, Mr. Hoffpauer will be afforded the opportunity to testify in person and to present any evidence in his defense.

(6) The Commission will make findings and recommendations based upon this evidence. My thoughts are that these recommendations should be concerned with:

- (a) When ^{the} the director is guilty of any irregularities; and, if so, what action the Commission will take; and
- (b) What, if any, changes in Commission policy are necessary to correct situations such as these, so that wrongdoing is not invited.

July 5, 1972

(7) A verbatim transcript of all testimony will be prepared, and a copy, along with the findings and recommendations, will be furnished to you and to the Attorney General.

We would welcome your suggestions or criticism of this procedure to be followed. I can assure you that we will continue our efforts to properly manage the fish and wildlife resources of this state. Your continued interest, concern and assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

LOUISIANA WILD LIFE AND
FISHERIES COMMISSION

JERRY G. JONES, Chairman

JGJ/cl